

A 1608/5807

LETTER

18 Decemb^r TO *1734*

G----- W----- Esq;

Concerning the

Present CONDITION
OF THE
COLLEGE
OF
DUBLIN,

And the late Disturbances that
have been therein.

Printed in the Year MDCCXXXIV.

A 1608/5807.

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S I R,



YOU are not alone in the Anxiety in which I left you, when I last parted from you: It is the Case of many Gentlemen who have Sons to dispose of. They are inclined to give them an academical Education, and would choose to have that Education in their own Country; and yet cannot without some Uneasiness think of placing them in a Society, that appears subject to such terrible Disorders. It is Sir without doubt a vexatious Alternative proposed to you. You are either to send your Son abroad, and at a much greater Expence, to enter into foreign Acquaintance, to engage in foreign Friendships, and grow up in such Pursuits as may tempt him to forget his Native Country, which may want his Presence hereafter: Or to place him in a College, where instead of good Principles, and good Examples, he may be in danger of meeting Riot and Disorder in every Shape.

You have desired my Advice and Opinion, upon the Resolution, it will be most prudent to take:

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You

You desire I should consider the Condition our College is in; and the Causes of the surprizing Accidents we have seen there of late: And herein you require I should be full and free. I am Sir obliged to obey you, and must on that Account undertake this Task, tho' to discharge it aright may possibly require an abler Head than mine. This only advantage I have, that I have thought long upon it, and both by my self and my Friends, have made all the Enquiries, that I did imagine could give me any Light herein.

There is no doubt Sir, the College is a disordered place: It is a thing universally lamented; but what I doubt its best Friends will be hardly able to redress. Were we unable to discover other Instances of this, yet the frequent and mischievous Riots that have been of late, are a Proof that cannot be overlooked. Where such Convulsions are frequent, the Body must be in an ill state: And how little soever apprehensive of Dangers, some may happen to be in such a Case, Ruin must, and will follow, unless a proper Remedy be applied. Where a Society is reduced into a disordered Condition, it is natural to imagine that they who govern therein, cannot be entirely without blame: who have suffered a Constitution that was once esteemed Healthy and Sound, to degenerate, in no great number of Years, into a State sickly and infirm. This is what the World do, and will think; and it is not likely that they mistake. However, that we may not leave room for Complaint, nor take things, for granted, where it is possible some Consideration may be required, we will examine a little this Conclusion, before we rest entirely thereupon. The Conclusion is, that, where Tumults, and Disorders
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and Mischiefs, in a Society ate frequent, there the Governors are insufficient, and do not perform their Duty; they only, or they chiefly, must be in fault. This it is certain in general, carries a very fair likelihood of Truth; and yet in some particular Cases it may perhaps admit of a Doubt. I think in our own City of late, and in *England* (oftentimes) we may have observed Accidents, that require us to think a second time upon this Point. This City was lately governed by a chief Magistrate, who did Honour to his Country; and to the Office he bore in it; and yet in his Magistracy, happened as obstinate Riots, as have been known almost at any other Time. These are therefore no infallible signs of a bad Government, since they are sometimes found in the best.

As to this College, it was never secure from Riots; and I have some Apprehensions it never will be: and yet doubtless it has had good Governors, and may possibly again. *George Browne* was a Ruler both loved and feared; and yet in his Administration happened one of the worst Riots, that ever was in the Society, the worst in all respects, except that no Blood was shed; although it was thought that a Blow he then received with a Brickbat, was the occasion of his Death in a few Years after. The immediate cause of this Tumult, was of the same kind, that produced some later ones; a design in the Governors to restrain the young Gentlemen to streighter Discipline, than these thought proper. It was not said nor supposed to proceed from any fault in the Governors. There might perhaps have been some little mismanagement in their Attempt to carry that particular Point: But the true fundamental Cause of this and all other

Riots, both before and after, must have been somewhat more general, and more grievous: And what that is, may not perhaps be so difficult to discover; provided we have any Inclination to judge fairly, and find out the Truth.

I would suppose, that any other Corporation in the King's Dominions were constituted after the same Fashion, and left on the same Footing, that this College is. The chief Magistrates empowered and required to enforce the Observance of certain Rules, in many Cases strict enough, and disagreeable to those they are to govern. That in Order to this, they are indeed to direct, advise, reprove, and punish: The last and greatest Penalty, they are to inflict, being Disfranchisement, and turning out of a Society, where perhaps some of their Members do reside, much against their Inclination. That in no Case, not even in Acts of Contempt, Obstinacy, or Disobedience; nay not in Riots, or Breach of the Peace, the Magistrate had a Right to lay Hands on any Offender, nor any possible Means of obtaining Assistance from abroad: No civil Power of any Sort, no Officer to prevent, or quell a Tumult; but a Fray, or Disturbance at any Time happening, the only Arms he has to employ, are, an Authority entirely unsupported by Force of every Kind.

I would fain know, Sir, whether any ordinary Corporation, instituted in no better Fashion, could be sure always of preserving Peace, or its Governors always sure of maintaining their Authority, I believe, you will at first Sight agree, that this may admit of some Doubt. Mankind is not so made, as to be always in a good Disposition, and willing to sub-

submit to Government; In the best Societies, there will be some found, whom, to keep quiet and obedient, you will want other Arguments than Reason and fair Words.

And yet, Sir, an ordinary Corporation how easily may that be governed? How tame a Society is it, compared to a College, made up of 5 or 600 young Men, in the very Pride and most unmanageable Years of Life? The one consists of Fathers of Families, Men of mature Age, Women, Children, with a small Mixture only of young and warm Spirits, not perhaps a fifth or sixth Part of the Whole; and even those under the Eyes and Influence of their Parents, Masters, Relations and Friends: The other made up wholly of Youths, from 17 to 24 Years of Age, just set free from School, just fancying they are become their own Masters; fierce with their long wished for, and new obtained Liberty, and consequently impatient of any Power, that is to restrain them in their Course. Is it to be imagined, that these will make up a Society more easy to be governed, than the former? If the bare Name of Authority is not found nor esteemed sufficient there, what good Reason can be given, that it shall suffice here? If he, who is to guide a Horse, but of ordinary Spirit, is allowed a Rein to hold him, and a Rod to correct him, is it reasonable to expect, that one of twenty Times the Courage, shall be kept in Order without either? Surely, Sir, there must be some Mistake, or Prejudice, or Partiality in this Matter, or it were not possible to compute so unequally.

It is therefore allowed in ordinary Corporations, that the bare Name of Authority, without Civil Power,

Power, is not sufficient to preserve Peace and good Government. I take for granted it is allowed, because I believe a Corporation never was without such Power; and that this College is the single Instance of the Kind in the King's Dominions, or perhaps in the World. Is it then to be supposed, that by removing the more governable Part, and retaining only the more warm and violent Spirits, Peace and good Government shall be more easily preserved? Suppose that 5 or 600 young Men, intended for any common Trade or Business in Life, were thus separated from the World, placed in a distinct Society by themselves, inclosed within their own Walls, and put into the Hands of 20 Masters, to be taught, directed, set at Work, restrained in many Things they might be inclined to, or turned out upon Misbehaviour: Is it to be imagined, that every single Youth here, would at all Times, and in all Junctures behave himself with perfect Modesty and Submission? That no one shou'd ever fly out into Obstinacy, or Rebellion, or Disrespect to his Governours? Especially if they shall know that there is nothing more to be feared on Account of Rebellion, than for twenty other Faults of less Consequence? That in no Case they need to apprehend the Affront of having Hands laid on them to restrain them; that if any presume to use Violence against them, they have a fair Right to return it; and as a still farther Encouragement, may conceive, that by getting half a Dozen or half a Score resolute Spirits to join in a Riot, they may ward off any Punishment, to be apprehended from any former Offence? I should doubt, Sir, that it would be difficult to keep such a Society as this in good Order.

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It is indeed on the other Hand to be considered, that the College is made up of Gentlemen. It is said Gentlemen are to be dealt with by Reason, and not by Force: If they behave themselves ill, there are the College-Censures; they may be turned out of the Society, if thought unfit to remain there. Where therefore can be the Need of Force? How decent and proper would it be for Gownsmen and Tutors, to use such Methods against young Gentlemen committed to their Care.

I am very sensible, how invidious a Topic This is, and how delicate it may be to discuss; and think it here necessary to premise, that I am by no Means advising such a civil Power to be given to the Fellows of the College. Were I one of them, I am clear, I should not wish to obtain it. Considering the long Prescription there has been for Riots there, and the Temper of some of the young Men, such a Power, whenever it came to be used, , would in all Likelihood produce very harsh Effects, and a very great Outcry against those, who had first caused it to be introduced. What I therefore propose, by considering this Affair, is, only to discover if it be a Thing attainable, to secure a Government from Tumults, without some Power of this Kind; that if by chance we learn this is a Point not to be obtained, we may then consider, if it be altogether wise to be surprized at Effects, whereof we see before us a very plain and sufficient Cause: Whether it would not be as prudent, since these Disturbances are thought the lesser Evil of the two, to bear them as patiently as we may.

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Among the Things here to be considered, the first and chief is, that the College in great Part is made up of Gentlemen; and this certainly is very true. Gentlemen not by Birth only, but, what is much more material in the present Question, and indeed in every Respect, by such a Behaviour, as constitutes that Character (so far as their Age will permit) and justly deserves that Name; by a willing and chearful Submission to the Customs and Rules of the Society they are Members of; and by a proper, decent, and well judged Behaviour in every Article of their Duty. And were it not that there are many such, the Society could not subsist. Besides these, it is also to be supposed, that there are many other well disposed young Men, who regularly mind their Studies, observe the College Discipline, and give no Cause of Offence. But then it must also be owned, every body has not those generous Manners, nor that gentle Mind, that are required in a Gentleman; nor even that peaceable and governable Disposition, that is necessary in every Member of civil Society. And it may be supposed, that some of this wrong Turn may find Admission even into Nurseries of Learning, as well as into every other Condition of Life. A few such will suffice to give Trouble in a Society. And I am informed, that some very bad Disturbances have been carried on in that College by a very small Number of them; and that among five or six hundred Youths, there should not be some few perverse, and even mischievous enough, would certainly be very particular, and somewhat uncommon. Of those who have naturally good Dispositions, it is not every young Man who is at all Times in a reasonable and governable

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Temper. The best of us perhaps, are not always so, but have our Fits of Sturdiness and ill Humour. Some may in a good Measure lose their good Disposition, before they are discovered in any very great Faults. They may by Laziness, by Love of Pleasure, by ill Company, by many Accidents be led into Habits, that may interfere with their Studies, and make their College Discipline irksome and tasteless to them. Some few may be supposed to get thither with bad Dispositions, with a Wildness and Unruliness not easy to be dealt with (there are of such in every Society.) Some endued with an Original Vanity and Conceit of themselves, never to be subdued into a right Way of Thinking, or a Habit of Obedience and Submission: Others with a View of being their own Masters, and of enjoying freely Pleasures, that the Rod restrained them from before. Restraint and Rules are troublesome to all Men, especially to the Young: What will they be to those who have still more particular Reasons to be displeased at them? When in Order to constrain them to Pursuits, that may not be so agreeable, they find themselves encumbered with Rules, hampered with Duties of many Kinds, hindered from their Diversions and Pleasures, censured for Neglects, reprov'd, fined, admonish'd, threatn'd to be turn'd out with Disgrace, severe Exercises laid on them, pursued, and their Behaviour narrowly watch'd by a particular Officer, or Lecturer, whose Duty it is to take Account of their Offences, and preserve the College from ill Examples: What are we to think their Behaviour will in these Circumstances be? Do we imagine, that they will never bethink themselves of any of those vicious Tricks,

that

that such Lads sometimes practise at School? That on the Contrary, they will be always mild, submissive, patient, and resigned? Are we to suppose, that none of them will ever think of adding Hardiness and Obstinacy to their other Accomplishments? That they will never take it in their Heads to revenge their Affronts on the Officers, who distress them? That they shall never think of forming a Party to ward off their Punishments, or, if they find Punishment unavoidable, that they shall never turn Head, and defy and affront that Government, that can do no more, than read a Paper against them? Certainly whoever counts upon all this, must little consider the Temper of which Men are made, and the Passions by which they are often governed. It is not their being called Gentlemen, nor their being the Sons of such, nor their wearing Gowns, nor their dwelling in the Seats of the Muses, that shall always restrain them: Nor will Reason, nor Laws and Statutes, unsupported by Force, always suffice to govern the unruly. A small Degree of coercive Power would have much greater Influence, and however harsh it may be thought, or however improper it may be to allow it, yet it will not fail to be often wanted.

But I have frequently heard it said, that the Fellows here, tho' they have not this Power, yet have such Honours and Respect secured to them, by their Statutes as must strike a Reverence into the Minds of the Youth; and must without some great Defect of their Side, preserve these in due submission.

The great and invidious Honour they have secured to them, and which I doubt is of more detriment to them than Service, is that of the Scholars capping.
And

And it is imagined by some, that this is a thing so important, of such Efficacy, that it ought to strike such a Regard, and Awe into the Minds of the Youth as to supply the place of Force, and be to the Governours instead of Civil Power. It is true, it is a great Honour, even more than is always paid to crown'd Heads: For that Reason I think it a little out of proportion, and it may produce sometimes, I apprehend, an Effect very contrary to what was intended. Power will generally secure Respect, whether it have outward Honours appointed it or not: But to give excessive Honours, where little or no Power attends them, is rather exposing the Person, thus dignified to Contempt, than the securing him a proper Respect. This Honour, I am confident would as cheaply be parted with, as any of the young Gentlemen could wish; but while the Fellows swear to observe their Statutes, and to enforce the Observation of them by others, they are by their Oaths obliged to require it; And it must be a Disposition particularly perverse, that can make a difficulty of yielding it. However, I cannot but think, an arch Boy is sometimes tempted to smile within himself, at the sight of one of these Fellows, strutting through the Courts, and causing every Cap to fall before him: Especially if the Lad should consider at the sametime, how easy it is for any half-score of those Gentlemen, who salute thus low, and with so much Reverence, to make this Governor and all his Brethren, forget their State, and like meaner Men betake them to their Heels for Safety.

But if all this be insufficient to keep them in order let them be admonished, whenever they are found to trans-

transgress: Let them be expelled as fast as they deserve it: Turn them out of the College with Disgrace. Where still can be the need of Force?

I have always imagined that Civil Power was necessary in every Society, in order to support the Governors, and protect them in the Discharge of their Duty; yet, by the difficulty I have often found, in convincing People in private Conversation, I have doubted, that with regard to the College I was guilty of some mistake. I shall therefore lay down certain Cases, that may be easily conceived to happen, and certain Facts that have happened, in order to try, if they will add any Evidence, to this doubtful Point.

Suppose for Instance by an Accident of any Kind, of which numbers have been, and a thousand more may be, that a dozen or twenty young Gentlemen are found engaged in some Fault that is contrary to their Statutes, that has brought Disgrace and Scandal on their College, and for which the Governours may think themselves obliged to inflict some Punishment; as in such Cases they most certainly are. The Figure that the College usually makes on such Occasion is this; the Senior Fellows meet in their Consultation Room in the Provost's House, they enquire into the Fact, they endeavour to discover how far the Guilt has proceeded, they examine what the Scholars have to offer in their Defence. The young Gentlemen, who are conscious of their Guilt, assemble in the Courts below, they have perhaps secured a Number of their Friends, they are surrounded with a great Crowd of their Brethren, how many they may have engaged to be of their Party is not to be discovered, and they give perhaps plain Intimations
that

that they are not inclined to suffer any Censure to pass upon them. Their Word is one and all, they find their number their Security, and will not suffer any one Man to be singled out, for an Example, fearing where it might light.

To disperse this Assembly by fair Words is not always to be attempted, with hopes of Success; and I am informed such Endeavours have sometimes failed. But why should this be undertaken? For if the Fellows, notwithstanding these threatening Appearances, resolve to inflict the Punishments, they are obliged; they are immediately to pass into the Hall, and there amidst the same Crowd, in full Assembly of the Scholars gathered by Toll of Bell, to admonish or expell, as they think prudent. Here is the Provost then, with seven Senior Fellows and the Dean, in the midst of all the Scholars of the College, doing his Duty, (it is true,) and reading his Censure against the Guilty; but what security has he that they shall attend it with Patience? He has his Authority and the Statutes indeed of his Side: but is he sure they will be sufficient with those, who have despised his Authority; who have, by all their Behaviour, by Cries and Outrages perhaps in his Passage thither, declared they will not patiently submit? Who have nothing farther to apprehend from his Power, have nothing to hope, nothing more to fear; who are young, hardy, desperate, and surrounded perhaps by a hundred of their Friends? I take for granted that a Governour of the best Resolution, and the strongest Nerves, may on such Occasion wear a very serious Countenance, and even feel some secret Palpitation of Heart, without any great Reproach.

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But he who sends a chief Governour among three or four hundred Youths, upon such an Errand, and no better attended, seems not quite enough to regard either the safety of his Person, or the Peace, or the Honour of his Government.

If a Board resolve to punish in such a Case as I have mentioned, this is the encouraging Scene they have to go thro' in order to it. But I doubt things do not always take this Course, (whatever the Fellows might desire the World should think) even where the Discipline of the College may demand it; and that the Danger sometimes has been prudently avoided. This is natural to think, and I believe on some occasions necessarily happens in such Cases as that above mentioned, while the Provost and Senior Fellows are deliberating in their Consultation Room, I apprehend they are sometimes in a very uneasy Situation, and very much perplexed what Resolution to take. To give up the Point, and not to punish a Crime proved, is breaking their Statutes, giving up their Authority, and telling the young Gentlemen that whenever they resolve not to be punished, they are secure. On the other hand to go on resolutely, and inflict the Punishment, their Statutes require, may perhaps commit them to the hands of an Inflamed Multitude, from whom, neither their Authority nor perhaps their Persons may escape unhurt. At least, I doubt not but this Suspicion has sometimes arisen in their Minds.

I figure to my self a Philosopher of a peaceable Disposition, looking out at their Consultation-Window, on that tumultuous Assembly below: weighing with himself the Honour of the Board, and the

Discipline of the College, against the Danger he may meet with in his Passage to the Hall: And I cannot help thinking, that he may possibly sometimes be smit with Apprehensions; that he may be disposed to let the Honour of the Board sleep for that Turn, and incline rather to peaceful Counsel. And tho' on some Occasions they have shewed sufficient Resolution, and exposed themselves to evident Danger, yet at other Times I doubt not they have prudently avoided the hazard, and rather suffered the Guilty to escape: And this perhaps all rightly considered the only wise Resolution they cou'd take.

But then when we allow this, what becomes of the Discipline of the College, must not every one here see, that original Errour, that defect of the Constitution, for which no other Device can make amends?

But it may be thought that these are needless Terrours. It is said, that no mischiefs have ever happened to any Fellows of the College, that it is not to be supposed the Youths would 'ay Hands on their Governours: It is said that a Governour should be a Man without Fear; and that such a one would bear all before him. On the contrary, I apprehend there are certain Cases, wherein the wisest and the stoutest Man need not blush to fear; and that such Cases in this College have been frequent; when, if the Governours had gone on without Fear, they had in all Likelihood met with sound Reasons to make them repent it. However, because Matters of Fact are most convincing, I shall mention some that seem to give still more Light in this Affair.

About thirty Years ago, there was occasion to admonish for some Offence, three or four young Men; for which purpose, the Provost and Senior Fellows went to the Hall as is usual, and read their Sentence against them; the young Gentlemen, tho' so few in number, yet gave a very signal Instance of their Resolution, and of the Affronts to which a chief Governor is exposed, who has no other Guards than his Counsellours to protect him. They advanced resolutely, tore the Paper out of the Dean's Hand, and turned the Provost out of the Hall. Indeed he came off for the Affront, but you may imagine that such a Compliment in the Sight of all the Youths, was no great Addition to his Authority, or Confirmation of his Power. And from some late Accidents, one may suspect, that should any Youths think fit to tread in the same Steps at any time to come; they may possibly not attend to the moderation recommended to them in this Action, but proceed to Lengths more violent and dangerous.

A later Instance there was a very few Years since, when the Senior Fellows being obliged to punish some turbulent young Men, made their way into the Hall through the midst of infinite Affronts and Reproaches: The Hall-Doors being locked against them by the Boys, they were obliged to break them open, to inflict their Censure: And what Reception they might have met from the young Gentlemen, who were within, was I imagine somewhat doubtful. It changed indeed that Fortune was on their Side, they carried their Point, and Sentence was executed. No man I think, can blame herein their want of Resolution; but let Men be ever so resolute, where
Justice

Justice is often to struggle and make its way through such Difficulties and Dangers, it is not to be expected it will be executed well; nor will it appear with that Dignity that it ought. And after some late Examples of Wildness and Barbarity among the Scholars, what degree of Resolution the Fellows will on these Occasions think fit to shew again, I leave to them to determine?

I shall only mention one Fact more which happened about a year ago, that of breaking into the Chamber of one of the Fellows, and exercising there every kind of Mischief and Affront that could be devised: And this executed, (as appeared afterwards,) by not more than six or eight Persons. Is a Society well instituted, where such things may and do happen, and no Provision is made against them? For what Provision is made, where no Man has a Right to repress such Violence? Or, who that is not armed with Authority, and Civil Power, will venture among Mad-men engaged in such an Undertaking? Besides what Diligence or Resolution is to be expected in executing the little Powers they have, from Men who find themselves exposed to such Damage and such Disgrace? Is it not to be feared, they will rather by Lenity and Indulgence, and giving up their College Discipline, seek for the praise of Popularity, and the favourable Opinion of those, who, when put out of Humour, see the Way so open to their Revenge?

Having laid these things together, less clearly perhaps than were to be wished, I leave you to consider what Conclusion ought to be made from them: for my part I find no Reason to alter mine; that in this

as well as in every other Society, making a distinct and separate Body, Power is a necessary and essential Thing. And that in the same Proportion as that is weak and defective, the Government will be lame and precarious, and the Governours at the Mercy of those whom they should direct.

I must needs appear tedious to you, in spending so much Time upon a Point so clear: Yet I cannot forbear mentioning one or two more Circumstances, that seem to make it still more evident.

Very often the Mischief arises from two or three young Gentlemen; sometimes from one single Head; and the Fellows discover and see the Contagion spreading before their Eyes: Had they in such Cases a Right to lay Hands on, and confine these Leaders till their Passion was over, very great and dangerous Evils might be avoided. As it is, they have nothing to do, but to look on, to wait till the Sparks have gathered Strength, and break out into a Flame.

Often it happens, that a young Man is censured and expelled, and yet refuses to go out of the College: He remains, and appears there in the Sight of the Provost and Fellows: He attends to infuse of his Spirit into his Acquaintance; No Man has a Right to lay Hands on him, or to turn him, or to keep him out of the College: And the Porters, who have sometimes received Orders to hinder such from coming in, have been severely handled for their Attempt, and no Remedy is to be obtained. Is it reasonable, that such young Men should be permitted to remain there? Can they be said to be expelled a Society, who have full Liberty to abide in it? Or is such Expulsion a sufficient Remedy against their evil Communication,
when

when it leaves them at Liberty to keep Company with the Scholars, as much as ever, and has only provoked them to do more Mischief than before.

In the Times of these late Disturbances, one of these young Men was present in the Hall; and to shew what Effect his Expulsion had on him, was the first to lay Hands on one of the Senior Fellows there present, and in the Execution of his Office. As he was known to have done this, he might indeed have been prosecuted for it at Law; but, for what Reason I know not, this was not thought of.

But not only these Gentlemen, but even Vagabonds, and idle People of the Town are at full Liberty (in Case of any Disorder) to pour themselves into the College: And that they have not seized this Opportunity to break open Rooms, and to do greater Mischief than has yet been thought of, is to me hard to account for.

Effectually to forbid Entrance to such, no Man within the College has a Right at present; nor can they ever be hindered, till some Members of the College be vested with civil Power; and till this be done, till all, or at least some of these Inlets to Disorder and Confusion be stopped, we may lament the Condition of the College, or we may abuse its Governours (if we choose this rather) but no Governour upon Earth can be sure he shall preserve it in Peace.

It would be a wild Supposition to make, that the Lord Mayor of *Dublin* had no more Power over his Citizens, than the Provost of the College has over the Scholars; and that, notwithstanding he was required to prevent, or to quell any Riots that shou'd happen among them. Were we to suppose only the
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Company of Weavers to be so far exempt from his Power, that in no Case he were ever to lay Hands on any of them; that for grievous Faults, he should only read a Paper to expel them his Liberties; and after all could not use Force to turn them out; that it were even judged a Matter too harsh, that the Courts of Justice should meddle in, or encourage a Prosecution against any of them, for Outrages committed, or Violences offered: In such Case, I say, who would not pity a Lord Mayor, who had such a City to govern? I ought, indeed, to ask Pardon of the Gentlemen of the College, for setting them in the same Light with Men, whom they may justly think beneath them: But where else to look for Instances of such Disorders, as have been among them, did not occur to me: I believe no Society thro' all *Europe*, made up of Gentlemen as they are, will afford them.

I have often heard it said, and sometimes was inclined to think, that this College might be well governed, provided it cou'd find a Provost equal in Resolution to a late Lord Mayor of *Dublin*, (whom I mention, as he always will be mentioned, with Honour.) But if we consider a little, what will the best Resolution do, that is utterly destitute of Power to support it? Power in the Hands of a resolute Magistrate, supporting his Authority, and discharging his Duty, will indeed do Wonders; and that Alderman *French* has shewn. But where there is no Power at all, what will Resolution, or the stoutest Look avail? Or what even the stoutest Heart, where the Hands are fast bound, and can give no Assistance?

The Universities at *Oxford* and *Cambridge* are not under these Difficulties in Case of any Disturbance:
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Their Proctors go about, attended by their Beadles, who bring with them the Means to prevent, or to quell any Mischief of this kind,

These two Universities, are Seats also of the Muses, as much as ours can pretend to be, at the least; They consist of Members, to whom if we allow an equal Share of Politeness and Civility with our own, I believe our Gentry will not thereat take Offence; yet, these two Universities are unwilling to trust entirely to the Reason and good Humour of the Members, for their good Government and Peace. Their Vice-Chancellors, and not they only, but several of the Heads of Houses, are Justices of the Peace, and thereby armed with Civil Power; That, if their Reasons, lighting on improper Subjects, should be ineffectual, the Arm of Power may prevail. Such Tumults therefore, as are frequent and terrible with us, are unknown there: If any should happen, there is a Force prepared to quell them; and other Method than that of Force, that shall be sure and effectual for the quelling of Tumults, is, I own, a Discovery that I have not yet learnt to have been made. They go farther; they have also a Prison prepared to lodge such unruly Spirits, as cannot otherwise be kept quiet. And in *Cambridge*, I am informed, they have Stocks set up in many of their Colleges; for what Use I am unwilling to say; yet I can hardly forbear saying, that scarce any Use of them can be too severe for those, who disturb the Peace of those Places, that are set apart for the sacred Retreats and Nurseries of Learning. For he who breaks the Order of Society in such an Abode, and introduces Disobedience and Confusion therein, of what Rank soever he be, how
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can he any longer be considered or dealt with as a reasonable Creature? Or what Method is there left to subdue him? And where is the Policy in punishing Crimes in the rudest Part of the Country, as well as in the best governed Cities, and Societies of all kinds, and permitting them there only, where the Youth of the Kingdom is educated; where the Foundation of all their Principles, Practices, and future Habits is laid?

But these Things I am not recommending for our Use. All I have hitherto mentioned, is for this only End, that, since this College is not allowed the Instruments, which alone are able to preserve Peace, which every Body's Experience has always seen to be necessary, without which no Corporation ever yet was governed, nor ever will be, no reasonable Judge ought to wonder, that in this College, Peace is not always preserved.

But I hear it said, if such Power be necessary, what need they go farther than the Lord Mayor and the civil Magistrates of the City to seek it? The College is in their Jurisdiction, the Magistrates of the City are at Hand to assist, what more therefore do they want? The College is indeed in their Jurisdiction, but as effectually privileged from them, in those Cases, where their Assistance is wanted, as if at a Thousand Miles Distance. The Affair generally stands thus: If they go with a Complaint to the Magistrate, that a Tumult is apprehended in the College, that there are certain unquiet Spirits, from whom Mischief is feared, and ask Assistance, and Protection against them; this is reckoned an idle Story, that the Governours of the College, armed with Dignity and
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Authority, as they are, should express any Fear of a few Boys under their Direction: And Answers of this Kind are very ready to be given. On the other Hand, if they wait till the Mischief has broke out, and threatens them and their College with Destruction; and if they then ask Aid to repress it, the Magistrate in this Case becomes apprehensive for the Safety of so many Gentlemens Sons, as are concerned in it: He is unprovided of Force sufficient to deal with such a Number: He is, not without Reason, sensible of the Danger of going amongst an incensed Multitude, and into a Place esteemed to be privileged from Justice and from Power; and then they are advised to have Patience, and to suffer the Storm to blow over as it may.

In Fact they never did assist the College, and I doubt it is not reasonable to expect they will. It would indeed be needless to think of any other Power, or to seek for Help elsewhere, if it might be had from the Magistrates of the City. But he that is to go a Mile for an Engine to quench a Flame, broke out in the Midst of his House, might as well save himself the Trouble, and see it burnt down at his Leisure; especially if the Engine be in the Hands of Managers, who will not let it move, till they are sure the Fire is large enough to demand it; and if it be any whit too large, may be apprehensive of suffering in the Flame. Whereas, were the Master suffered to keep but a Bucket or two in his House, he might upon an accidental Spark lighting any where, extinguish it without Trouble or Hurry.

But it must be owned, there seems to be some small Matter of Reflection, that this Defect in their Con-

stitution should appear so much more strongly at present, than ever it did heretofore. Tho' one lov'd the College never so well, and esteemed its Governours never so much, yet at first Sight it might puzzle one to account for this. And one can hardly help imagining, there must be something particularly wrong at this Time, to make this Want so much more felt, than it had used to be. However this I will say, that it is now a long Time, since I fancied, I observed Things were taking this Turn, and tending to the Period, at which they are lately arrived.

In Order to explain my self, I desire you would recollect the Times, in which the College was unacquainted with these Disorders, and every Thing moved in due Subordination and Peace, at least with Regard to the Governours. These Times are often extolled, and cryed out for, as the happy Times of the College, of good Example, and strict Discipline, when Vices and Luxuries, now common, were unknown. And I believe it may be allowed, some ill Customs have crept in, and perhaps they have suffered some good ones to fall; perhaps also it may be as truly affirmed, that some good Customs are introduced, and ill ones banished.

But I desire you will remember who were then the great Disciplinarians of the College, and preserved it in such Submission to the Provost and Fellows. Was it their precarious Authority; or the Power and Vigilance of the Deans; or the superior Skill and Conduct of the then Fellows? No certainly, there were much more cogent Arguments to Sobriety and Modesty than these. You cannot possibly forget the dread we oft have endured from the Senior Sophisters Sand,
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and the Batchelors Foot. The Youth, when set free from School, did not then immediately commence a Gentleman, tho' he put on a Gown; at least, if it be unavoidable, that his Gown must have made him a Gentleman, he bore his Quality much more meekly and modestly than some do at present. He found himself, tho' set free from the Rod, yet still begirt with Danger: He had Evils on all Sides, and was obliged to use some Degree of Skill and Caution in his Demeanour, or it was easy for him to fall into terrible Inconveniencies. There was then indeed a Discipline kept up: The Penalties were somewhat rough, but it was always my Opinion, and I am now much confirmed in it, they were not more so, than the Case required. There was then a due Subordination of the Freshmen to the Sophisters, of these to the Batchelors, and of all to the Fellows. And in the Want of that Power, all other Corporations have, this seems the only Hedge about the Authority of the Governours, that could be devised. A Freshman then hardly dared to lift up his Eyes with Insolence, towards the Fellows, when he saw so many terrible Powers planted in the Way between them: And the Want of Civil Authority in the Governours seems to me the true Origin of the subordinate Powers in the College. They found they were to govern young Men, not all of them in those rough Times sufficiently tamed, and broken into Civility and good Manners; and that it was not always they were disposed to submit to an Authority, that could not be enforced. In this Situation, I suppose, they permitted these inferior Powers; and they had the intended Effect; Some little Rasures happened sometimes in the Checks

of a forward young Man; but the Mischief was nothing, and the Good was great. However this barbarous Method, as it was called, giving Offence to the tender hearted Mothers; and some of the Governours of those Days, thinking it a Discipline too rude, they resolved to abolish it; and after much struggling, were happy enough to atchieve their Purpose. But had they thoroughly considered what there was to put in its Place, they had perhaps been less earnest to execute their Resolution. But this is a Transaction long since past.

Now then the Youth dismissed from School, and putting his Gown on his Back, becomes a Man, a Gentleman, and rises into the World at once. All terrors are at once removed from about him; he walks secure in his own Paths; he sees no intermediate Authority placed between the Fellows and him. If therefore he takes Offence, he takes Offence immediately at them: If he has any little mischievous Conceit to execute, it is levelled against them. He sharply watches their Behaviour towards him, is very jealous of his new Dignity, and very ready to resent any thing, that he fancies is said or done to him amiss. There is now no Master over him, no civil Magistrate who has a Right to restrain him, no Sophister, no Batchelor to put him in Mind of his Duty, and preserve him within Bounds. The Fellows are become the only Officers, and the two Deans the chief Officers of the College: They only are to see all Faults, at least they alone are to punish all.

If they, especially the Deans, be diligent and conscientious in the Discharge of their Duty, how agreeable, is it likely, they will make themselves to
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the greater Number of the College? And what an extraordinary Chance must it not be, to go thro' with Applause? If they have any Fault, or any Failing, (and who has them not) how surely will they, and all the World hear of them? But what is most to our present Purpose; be they never so faultless, never so praiseworthy, how necessary, how unavoidable it is, that the publick Peace must be often disturbed? There was then a powerful Class of Senior Sophisters, 60, 80, perhaps 100 strong; all Officers of Justice; all armed with Authority; all executing Punishments for Crimes on the Spot. Their Eyes were every where, their Resolution and Unanimity not to be withstood.--- What is now in the Place of this? A few Fellows, or rather the two Deans, who are to punish every Fault, every Insolence, must oppose themselves to every irregular Gentleman's Displeasure: Who are to correct many and often grievous Abuses, and this in a Society, where there is nothing but a bare Authority, without any Civil Power to support them: Who also, considering the Accidents that sometimes happen there, may un luckily hit upon this Reflection, that, tho' a strict Execution of the College Statutes, and punishing all Offences of the Scholars, may be most for the Publick Good; yet Lenity and Indulgence, and winking at Faults, may best provide for their particular Safety, Peace, and Reputation. There is no need to reproach the *Irish* with being a wild Nation; but certainly, if these Means were sufficient to preserve a Society of 500 young Men in perpetual Peace, we might boast, that in Civility, and Politeness, in Tameness and Gentle-

Gentleness of Manners, they yielded to no Nation upon Earth.

Thus much I have ventured to advance towards the Support of an Opinion, in which I find I am pretty singular: That this College, being destitute of all Civil Power, cou'd scarce at any time hope to be secure from Tumults; and having entirely pulled down the little Authority of their Sophisters and Batchelors, can much less promise it to themselves at present, than they could heretofore.

Some other Causes may perhaps help forwards their Disorders; but these I have mentioned, I should take to be the Root and the Foundation of all their Evil, and such as must necessarily produce it.

If we have a Mind to be better convinced of the Influence of these Powers, towards preserving Peace and good Government, we need only reflect on that Time, wherein these Privileges were tending fast to their utmost Period. Had there then been among the Scholars any Share of that Disposition, in which they have been of late, they could not have desired more Reasons for shewing it, nor an ampler Field, wherein to expatiate. About that Time I was often among my Friends in the College, I observed their Proceedings, and am almost tempted to say of them: There was then no Judge in *Israel*, but every one did that, which was right in his own Eyes. There was then an easy, good natured Governour, who was often absent in *England*; and when here, to say no more, was the mildest of all Rulers. There were Lecturers, who seldom attended Lectures, even the publick ones. Fellows, who often in a Month were not seen at Prayers: Commons greatly neglected;
Deans

Deans who never once thro' the Year ----- But it might be an invidious Thing to go thro' all the Particulars which might be mentioned. The Truth is there was some Room for Outcry, if the Youth had been so disposed. However Things went on tolerably well; neither was any Noise raised against the Governours abroad, nor did any remarkable Disturbances happen at Home: On the contrary, in these Times did the Favour of the Parliament extend itself largely to the College, by the Grant of considerable Sums of Money; and the Fellows were well reputed of, and esteemed in the World. The young Gentlemen under their Care, were not yet become their Censors; they were not yet encouraged by their Friends to bear about idle Tales of their Misbehaviour, or Neglects; nor was that Respect and Reverence, in which they were maintained, by the subordinate Powers of the Batchelors and Sophisters, yet worn out of the Minds of the Youths.

These Powers were long discouraged by the Governours, but yet the Batchelors and Sophisters gave them up with great Reluctance, and struggled hard in their Defence: And they every now and then, notwithstanding severe Prohibitions, ventured to exert them against notorious and insolent Offenders. They went farther to defend them, and even stirred up some Riots in the College, in Order to oblige the Fellows to continue them in their Privileges; Which Riots are by some injudiciously charged upon the Powers themselves. But not long after the Time which I have mentioned, they were finally and effectually put down. And as this was settled many Years since, you may possibly imagine, that had these

these Powes contributed any Thing to the Preservation of Peace and good Government in the College; the Suppression of them would have produced its worst Effects, and been sensible long before this.

But you will consider, Sir, that neither is good Order, nor Confusion introduced into any Society at once: The Establishment of the severest Penalties, will not at once settle Order in a Society long corrupted; nor will the gradual Removal of Penalties, at once debauch those, who have been long acquainted with Discipline, and subject to good Laws. The good Order therefore, which, in my Account, the Power of the Sophisters did chiefly maintain, might continue in Part for many Years after their Powers were abolished. It would naturally require some considerable Time, before the young Men can be supposed to have made a full Discovery of the Weakness of their Government, and how utterly precarious the Power of the Governors is. Without this, it is not to be conceived, that they did not arrive sooner at the Degree of Confusion, in which they were of late: For it cannot be imagined, but that a Spirit was infusing itself, and preparing to give those Signs of its Force, which the College lately felt, and does yet lament. Every succeeding Year, the Boys went thither with less Awe on their Minds, knowing, that the Terrors of Sophistry were removed: Every Day's Stay there confirmed them more in their Resolution, and a general Confidence of Behaviour, having fewer Eyes on them to observe their Conduct; Being sensible, they are in no Danger of Corporal Punishment for Offences of any Kind, even for Breach of the publick Peace, or for higher Crimes.

Crimes. What a Difference this from the Condition they were in at School; and how great and sudden the Change, to be born with Moderation and Temper.

Were I therefore asked my Opinion, of the Cause of the late Disorders in the College, I should make no Difficulty to answer at once, That the College is ill constituted from the Beginning: They want that Civil Power, which alone is able to deal with, and subdue those turbulent Spirits, some of which are to be found in every Society, in every Rank and Condition of Life. They have indeed many good Statutes, they have Censures, Admonitions, and Expulsions; which are sufficient for the governable, the mild, and the gentle: But they have also some among them, who value not these Things; who will commit Faults, and will not be punished for them; and against the Insolence and Outrage of these they have no Provision. And therefore, as oft as two or three Gentlemen of this Turn are disposed to be unruly, their House must be disturbed with Riots, which I believe, no Governors can be certain, they shall be able to prevent, or to quell. They had indeed one Guard about them, the Power of the Batchelors and Sophisters, and this they have thought proper to pull down: What good Effects this has produced, and how prudently it was resolved, I suppose, they are convinced; tho', I own the Reasons for it, did never to me appear satisfactory. The principal one that I have often heard assigned, namely, that they were the Causes of Disturbances in the College, I can by no Means comprehend to be a good one. Of Riots against the Governors, they certainly never were the

Cause: The Endeavours to suppress Privileges on one Side, and to maintain them on the other, might possibly occasion some Tumults; the Powers themselves never did. Disturbances among the Scholars they might sometimes occasion, when a stubborn Boy refused to observe Rules, or to submit to the Penalties due to the Neglect of them. But such little Uneasinesses every State must bear with, if they resolve to have Justice executed against insolent and violent Offenders. And which are least inconvenient, or which ought rather to be born; Disturbances, which arise from the Execution of Justice, and Preservation of Discipline, or Disturbances, which arise from the Want of Officers to enforce it, and are therefore levelled against the Government itself: Whether of these two Sorts ought rather to be submitted to; this, I say, requires no great Discernment to determine. All the Difference is this: Were I a Governour, I should incline to bear with the former; were I one of the governed, I might possibly choose to endure the other.

Thus far I have, Sir, in Obedience to your Commands, considered the present Condition of the College of *Dublin*; and it must be owned, it cannot be accounted a good one. So far as I am able to understand, or to judge of these Affairs, it is exposed, unavoidably, and by its Constitution exposed to Disorders and to Riots. And, I imagine from what I have said, it must appear, that they necessarily are more so at present, and have been more so of late, than they formerly were, be their Governours of what Kind you please to suppose.

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The Provisions here made for preserving Peace, and the Care had of supporting the Governours of the Society, may perhaps be thought sufficient for an *Irish* College; but certainly would not be so esteemed in any other Nation in *Europe*: And so long as they, who watch over the publick Welfare, and provide for the good Government of every other Part of the Nation, do foresee any Inconvenience in extending the same Care towards this College; so long, I should think, private Men might be entreated, to have some little Indulgence for Governours, who are overborn by Evils, that it is not in their Power to redress.

That I may not, Sir, too much weary your Patience at once, I shall here end this long, and ill digested Letter. I have prepared, and shall suddenly send you a Second; wherein I shall a little venture to enquire, whether there be any other Errors or Neglects, (as it is generally imagined) that may contribute to encrease their Disorders. I am, Sir, in the mean Time, with all the Duty and Respect, with which I am bound,

Your most Obedient Servant.

The Provision made for preserving Peace and the Care and of supporting the Government of the Society may perhaps be thought sufficient for an Anglo-Collector but certainly would not be so esteemed in any other nation in Europe. And so long as they who watch over the publick Welfare and provide for the good Government of every part of the Nation, do forbear any inconvenience in extending the same Care towards the College; so long, I should think private Men might be contented, to have for the Intelligence for Government, who are overborn by Hopes, that it is not in their Power to reach.

That I may not say too much weary your Patience at once, I shall here end this long, and ill digested Letter. I have prepared, and shall industriously send you a Second; wherein I shall a little venture to enquire, whether there be any other Errors or Mistakes, (as it is generally imagined) that may contribute to encrease their Disorders. I am, Sir, in the mean Time, with all the Duty and Respect, which I am bound,

Your most Obedient Servant.



